

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

NIC-8272-83
15 November 1983

National Intelligence Council

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM :

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SUBJECT : First Hand Impressions of Eden Pastora

1. Eden Pastora appeared last night at the Carnegie Endowment's Face-to-Face Program before an audience (list of attendees attached) of generally high level and influential foreign affairs specialists. His prepared remarks were on the record, but the approximately two hours of questions and answers were not. Pastora was accompanied by two of his top advisers, and had the services of an interpreter.

2. His performance in my view, was unerringly adroit. Like many other observers, I had long believed that he is mercurial, obstinate, and intellectually quite limited. (Incidentally, he took that one on frontally claiming that the Sandinistas have made enormous propaganda efforts to portray him as a "loco.") As a result of the dinner meeting last night, however, Pastora has risen substantially in my estimation.

3. In tough question and answer sessions before and after dinner, he:

- Was clever and articulate in avoiding innumerable traps laid by skeptical and critical questioners, and in arguing forcefully for his cause.
- Was consistent; he did not contradict himself even through some tortuous discourse, or seem to.
- Deferred openly to his advisers on at least two occasions, and emphasized skillfully a certain collegiality in ARDE's leadership.
- Employed humor, wit and gracefully controlled passion in reinforcing the expectation that he has charismatic qualities.

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-- Gave the impression that he is pragmatic and flexible. Asked, for instance, if he would rather make a deal with a "sanitized FDN or a sanitized FSLN," he opted for the latter! Earlier, nonetheless, he has made it clear that "twenty well known Somocista faces" constitute his only real objection to cooperating openly with the FDN.

4. In short, it was an impressive performance, and worked favorably I think on the majority in an audience largely disposed at the outset to ridicule and dismiss him.

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